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Abstract Trafikdage07

*A unique rail project – SørVestBanen*

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The gap between transport work done and the goals of shifting from road transport to more environmentally sustainable modes keep widening (EEA 2006). Rail transport inter-cities could be an instrument for such a shift, however the rail infrastructure has suffered a lack of investment for 30 years. SørVestBanen is a vision and project that could facilitate such a shift through basically upgrading the existing track and offer high frequency services, both for passengers and freight. It runs 600km between Oslo-Kristiansand-Stavanger and serve 2,4 million people, half of Norway's population. D2D travel times will be competitive with air, buses and cars. The project costs 25 billion NOK, social benefits are greater than costs, and the hourly train services will run with a large surplus. The research groups Agder Research and IRIS, and Railconsult have created "SørVestBanen". This unique project has little chance to be prioritised in the next National Transport Plan. The paper analyse why this project that could shift substantial pkm and tkm to rail and thus meet stated objectives, has difficulties in the strategic planning process. It also discusses the basis for making traffic forecasts for major projects and how the forecasts influence the strategy (Flybjerg 2003). The EU and many national transport policies have major problems with achieving their goals, in times of climate threats it is even more important to identify obstacles and remove them.